

## Foster Care & Adoption Reform Legislation: Implementing the Adoption & Safe Families Act of 1997

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## PANEL THREE

### FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION REFORM LEGISLATION: IMPLEMENTING THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT OF 1997

REVEREND JOHN J. COUGHLIN\*

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Rev. Coughlin is an Adjunct Professor of Law at St. John's Law School. He teaches Family Law and Professional Responsibility, and serves as Faculty Advisor of *The Catholic Lawyer*.

Prior to joining the St. John's Law faculty, Rev. Coughlin served as: a Professor of Canon Law and Spiritual Director at St. Joseph's Seminary (1994-98); Episcopal Vicar for Legal and Canonical Aspects of Health Care of the Archdiocese of New York (1997-98); Judge for the NYS Catholic Interdiocesan Appeals Tribunal (1995-Present); General Legal and Canonical Counsel to the Franciscan Friars of the Holy Name Province (1993-96); General Counsel to the University and Assistant Professor in the School of Business at St. Bonaventure University (1992-93); Law Clerk to the Honorable Frank X. Altamari of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (1989-90); Associate Pastor at St. Stephen of Hungary Church (1982-83); and History Teacher at Bishop Timon High School

I want to begin our proceedings now that everyone has arrived. This is the third and final panel of the afternoon in our excellent conference on children and human rights. We will now discuss the implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997,<sup>1</sup> also known as ASFA. We have a distinguished group of panelists and because we want to get right to it, the panelists have been kind enough to dispense with the lengthy biographical introductions. If you are interested in those, and they are interesting, they're available in the booklet that was given out.

Our panelists, however, I think will not disappoint you. Our first speaker is Bernadine Dohrn, the director of the Children and Family Justice Center at Northwestern School of Law, and we are very happy to welcome her here today to the St. John's University School of Law.

(1977-78).

His publications include: *Intervention of the Holy See to the Plenary Session of the Treaty Conference for the International Criminal Tribunal*, in *L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO* (1988); *Administrative Justice at the Apostolic Signatura and the United States Supreme Court: A Comparative Study of the Canonical and Anglo-American Legal Traditions* (Gregorian University 1994) (doctoral dissertation); *Religion, Education and the First Amendment*, *Am.* (1993); *Justice White's Dissents in the Parochial School Aid Cases: Patron of Lost Causes or Precursor of Good News*, 66 *St. John's L. Rev.* 261 (1992); *Book Note: The New Science and Ethics of Reproduction*, 21 *Harv. Civ. Rts.-Civ. Liberties L. Rev.* 742 (1986); and several other articles.

Rev. Coughlin also serves on the Board of Directors of St. Francis College, Fidelis Care, St. Vincent's Hospital, and St. Francis Hospital, and on the Finance Committee of Catholic Healthcare Network. He previously served as a member of the Delegation of the Holy See for the United Nations Conference on International War Crimes (1998), the Ad Hoc Committee for the Review of the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of New York (1995), the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse for the English Speaking Conference of Order of Friars Minor (1994), the Public Policy Committee of the New York State Catholic Bishops' Conference (1993-95), and the Executive Committee and Committee for Self-Investigation and Infractions Report to the National Collegiate Athletic Association for St. Bonaventure University (1992-93).

<sup>1</sup> Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Pub. L. 105-89, Nov. 19, 1997, 111 Stat. 2115) [hereinafter ASFA].